



Report of Project Activities

Department of Labor and Workforce Development
Division of Business Partnerships



DENALI TRAINING FUND

PROGRESS REPORT

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| NAME OF ORGANIZATION: First Alaskans Institute NAME OF PROJECT: Denali Training Fund REPORT PERIOD: October 1, 2006-December 31, 2006 |
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PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Briefly describe the grant activities undertaken during the period and any accomplishments achieved.

This quarterly report covers how First Alaskans Institute is continuing in its efforts to assist Alaska Natives and other rural residents in acquiring the skills and training necessary to participate fully in private sector business and economic development opportunities. This is accomplished through internships, fellowships, scholarships, public service programs and other leadership development initiatives.

This quarterly report includes these components: Close-Out and Evaluation of the 2006 Summer Internship and Leadership Friday Sessions, Recommended Program Changes for 2007, Recruitment Activities for 2007, Web Based Tracking Database Update, and Enhancements to the 2007 program.

Close-Out and Evaluation of Summer Program

The fourth quarter activities consisted primarily of preparations and planning for the 2007 program. Several changes will be made to the 2007 program as a result of the evaluations at the end of the 10-week program. The cumulative evaluation score was 4.7, out of a total of 5 for the leadership Friday component.

A summary of the comments and discussion with the interns at the close-out session on the final day of the 2006 Summer program (August 11) indicates the following:

- The interns would like more face-to-face time during the 10-week period. A third of the interns were placed in rural Alaska or outside of Anchorage and participated in the Leadership Fridays sessions via telecon and web cast. Due to logistics and technical variances, the quality of the web cast was not consistent and led to some frustrations;
- Strengthen the communications with the larger employers so the interns don't feel 'lost' in their systems;
- Continue the sessions on these topics:
 - Alaska history and significant events that impact rural and Alaska Natives;
 - Public speaking and presentations;
 - Etiquette;
 - Culture, identity and leaders role in perpetuating
- Have options for inclement weather during group functions;

- More smaller group discussions as opposed to primarily large group presentations;
- Strengthen administrative communications with longer lead times for announcements.

Recommended Program Changes for 2007

To address the above recommendations, the following changes are planned for the 2007 program:

- Increase the 2-day orientation at start up to five days to provide the requested face time and to alleviate the logistics issues of the web cast. The Alaska history and issues impacting its people will be presented during that week, along with the Myers Briggs training and Etiquette, introductions to facilitation and strategic planning processes. More time will be allowed for smaller group discussions and problem solving to allow for more time to get to know each other better;
- To stay connected over the summer, the plan is to have 4-half day Friday sessions covering more of the Qualities of Leaders and High Performing Organizations, Politics and Public Policy Development, and Culture and Native Values;
- The interns will then regroup at the end for four days to prepare for their end of season event, finish the Leadership Fridays content (Service Learning, Site Visits), final debrief, and evaluation session;
- Expand program to include policy opportunities in Washington D.C. and Juneau internships;
- Expand program to year-round, with Leadership Development sessions for those already in leadership positions and who are not necessarily college students (could include tribal leaders, others employed in emerging management/leadership positions, etc.)

Recruitment Activities for 2007

Recruitment for partner companies and interns began in December with outreach focused on new partners. To date, Partner Interest forms have been received from over 20 companies, the majority of which are new and based in rural Alaska. As in past years, student recruitments are lagging behind the employers'; the recruitment time may need to be extended to the end of March when summer plans are more on students' minds.

The recruitment notices were posted on the First Alaskans web, announced via e-mail to past partner companies, potential and interested employers, and a variety of organizations, colleges, and individuals that are in regular communication with students. Copies of the program announcement are attached which includes recruitment and selection timelines for the 2007 program year for interns and employers and the application process (Attachment 1). The recruitment deadline dates have been moved up several months to allow for students and employers who are not selected ample time to make other plans (from April last year to February this year).

The Intern Manual has been mentioned in past reports. That document has been shared with potential employers and one Regional Corporation who is interested in starting their own program, which was the intent of the manual. The document will be posted on First Alaskans' website for others to use as a model for such a program. First Alaskans will send a notification when the manual is posted to our website.

The decision was made to hire a former intern and current student for the Intern Coordinator's position in spring, 2006. He returned to school full time in September, and continued to work part-time until the end of October. We have determined that position needs to be filled by an individual who can commit full time and year round. A recruitment notice for this position was posted in December with a hire date scheduled for the end of January.

Web Based Tracking Database Update

Using the logic model, planning is underway to have a Master's student complete a more in-depth evaluation of the program to measure whether the intended goals of the project are being met. This will include an assessment of each participant, and questions about their current status and future plans. The survey will include the impacts the program has had on their plans for the future, whether they have received full or part time employment, their service on boards/committees/councils or in volunteer work, impacts on further education, promotions, etc.

This info will come through extensive interviews and contact with each of the almost 70 participants to date.

First Alaskans' website has been revamped and the directory of other Intern Programs operating in Alaska has been updated during this quarter and will be placed on First Alaskans website by the end of January. This directory provides information on other intern programs for interested persons to apply to.

A review of the technical challenges of the web cast delivery for those in rural Alaska was completed, and recommendations to improve these included the change to more face to face sessions at the front and back ends of the 10 weeks. While the web cast method served our purposes, the quality wasn't sufficient to continue under the same contract. Inquiries will be made during the first quarter with rural-based organizations on their technology capacities to insure the web cast sessions during the middle of the summer program are of the highest quality.

Enhancements to the 2007 Program

With proven success of the summer Intern program and the identified need for an enhanced program, planned additions in 2007 and beyond include the following:

- In conjunction with the Alaska Native Policy Center's Discussion Series, monthly ½ day sessions for upcoming executives (next levels up from in-school interns) are planned to cover such topics as Etiquette, Native History and Critical Issues, Myers-Briggs, Strategic Planning, Communications and Conflict Resolution, Boards (dealing with and getting on them), Giving Back to the Community, Lobbying and the Governmental Processes, Goal Setting, Balancing Work/Family/Leisure, etc.
- Research will be conducted to offer Continuing Education credits
- Policy positions in Washington, D.C., and Juneau internships in 2008

PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT REPORTING PERIOD:

The next quarter's report will include:

- the selection of the Intern Coordinator, and additional recruitment activities for partner companies and interns;

- the content for Leadership sessions and speakers using last year's evaluations (Attachment 2);
- other possible sources of funding for the 2008 program and for expenses in 2007 (speakers travel, for example) not covered by the grant will be researched;
- the technology options will be reviewed for the distance delivery sessions and contracts negotiated;
- logistics for the two weeklong sessions in Anchorage will be explored for pricing and securing meeting and room and board space;
- at least one employer meeting will be held to provide an orientation about the program.

PROBLEMS, DELAYS OR CONCERNS EXPERIENCED:

Are the grant activities progressing as planned? If not, what is the cause? Identify if there are any areas the Alaska Workforce Investment Office can provide assistance.

None at this time

POSSIBLE PROBLEM RESOLUTIONS AND TIMEFRAMES:

For any problems identified, describe how you will resolve them and how long it will take.

Certification: I certify that the above information is true and correct and in accordance with the terms and conditions of the agreement.

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| <u>Merry Dahl, Leadership</u> | <u>Ma. Dahl</u> | <u>1-16-07</u> |
| Name and Title | Signature | Date |
| <u>Development</u> | | |
| <u>Director</u> | | |